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Letter dated 3 March 2003 from the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Pursuant to Article 54 of the Charter of the United Nations, I have the honour to transmit to you herewith the resolutions of the fifteenth session of the Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level in Sharm el-Sheikh on 1 March 2003, on the following items:

1. The serious threats to Iraq and the dangers to the Arab States, the possibility that the situation might lead to a military conflict and the grave repercussions that this would have for the region and for the peace of the Arab nation (Summit resolution 243 (15) of 1 March 2003) (see annex 1);

2. The situation between Iraq and Kuwait (Summit resolution 244 (15) of 1 March 2003) (see annex 2);

3. The Arab-Israeli conflict, the evolution of the Palestinian question, intensified Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and its impact on peace and security in the Middle East region (Summit resolution 245 (15) of 1 March 2003) (see annex 3).

I should be grateful if you would draw the attention of the members of the Security Council to these resolutions and have them circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Yahya **Mahassani**
Ambassador
Permanent Observer

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Annex 1 to the letter dated 3 March 2003 from the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Resolution

The serious threats to Iraq and the dangers to the Arab States, the possibility that the situation might lead to a military conflict and the grave repercussions that this would have for the region and for the peace of the Arab nation

The Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level,

1. Having discussed the grave developments in the Iraq crisis,

2. Reaffirming resolution 227 adopted at its Beirut Summit in 2002, in which it categorically rejected an attack on Iraq or a threat against the security and integrity of any Arab State,

3. Reiterating its satisfaction at the assurances given by the Syrian Arab Republic, the Arab member of the Security Council, concerning resolution 1441 (2002), the fact that the aforesaid resolution does not constitute a pretext for waging war on Iraq and the fact that the resolution does not provide for automatic recourse to military action, thereby expressing the Arab position of support for the international legitimacy represented by the Security Council and its mission of investigating weapons of mass destruction in Iraq,

4. Welcoming again with satisfaction the fact that the Iraqi Government agreed to the return of inspectors, is guaranteeing their complete freedom of movement and is giving them the means to perform the mission entrusted to them by the Security Council as effectively and objectively as possible,

5. Praising international positions opposed to the use of force against Iraq, believing that war would seriously undermine stability in the region and throughout the world,

6. Taking into consideration the many diplomatic contacts pursued by the Arab States with States members of the Security Council, internationally and with the Republic of Iraq in an effort to avoid a war in the region and ensure maximum cooperation with the inspection process, pursuant to Security Council resolution 1441 (2002),

7. Taking note of the reports presented to the Security Council by the chiefs of the two inspection teams on weapons of mass destruction, particularly the reports presented on 14 February 2003, which described the progress achieved with regard to Iraq's cooperation with the inspectors,

8. Taking into account the Security Council's responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, believing that the Council must play its role in dealing with the Iraq crisis in all its aspects by implementing its relevant resolutions, preserving the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Iraq and lifting the sanctions against Iraq,

9. Taking into account the great dangers and adverse consequences that would accompany any military action against Iraq and its people, as well as attempts by Israel to occupy the country in order to carry out its plans to empty the occupied

Palestinian territories of their inhabitants and replace them with Israeli settlements, thereby compounding the suffering of the Palestinian people,

Decides:

1. To emphasize its categorical rejection of a strike against Iraq or a threat to the security and integrity of any Arab country, believing that this poses a threat to the security of the Arab nation, and to underscore the need to resolve the Iraq crisis peacefully, within the framework of international legitimacy;

2. To call upon all countries to support Arab efforts to avoid a war by ensuring that Iraq implements Security Council resolution 1441 (2002) fully;

3. To request that the inspection teams be given sufficient time to complete their mission in Iraq and to ask them to continue to perform their mission objectively;

4. To emphasize the Security Council's responsibility for ensuring that Iraq and its people are not attacked and for preserving Iraq's independence and territorial integrity, and to underscore the need to guarantee the security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Iraq's neighbours;

5. To affirm that its member States will refrain from participating in any military action against the security and territorial integrity and unity of Iraq or any other Arab country;

6. To express again its solidarity with the long-suffering Iraqi people and to state that the time has come to lift the embargo against Iraq, within the framework of the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions, particularly resolution 687 (1991);

7. That the Kingdom of Bahrain will set up a presidential committee in cooperation with the member States, to also include the outgoing President, the incoming President and the Secretary-General of the Arab League, as well as any other States that wish to join. This committee will be responsible for making contact with the international parties concerned and explaining the Arab position, particularly to the permanent members of the Security Council, and for consulting with the Iraqi Government, in the context of the Arab League Summit resolutions on Iraq, on ways to tackle the serious challenges confronting Iraq and the dangers and risks threatening the Arab countries;

8. To emphasize that the affairs of the Arab nation and the development of its regimes are decided by the peoples of the region, based on their national and State interests and free from any outside interference; in this context, the Arab leaders denounce attempts to impose change on the region or interfere in its internal affairs, without regard for its own interests and problems;

9. To view the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq as part of the process of eliminating weapons of mass destruction in the region, including Israel, in accordance with paragraph 14 of Security Council resolution 687 (1991);

10. To continue to follow closely the evolution of the question of Iraq.

Resolution 243 of the fifteenth session of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level, adopted on 1 March 2003.

Annex 2 to the letter dated 3 March 2003 from the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Resolution

The situation between Iraq and Kuwait

The Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level,

Having considered resolution 227 adopted at its Beirut Summit in 2002,

Decides:

1. To recall the assurances given by the Republic of Iraq at the Beirut Summit that it would respect the independence, sovereignty and security of the State of Kuwait and guarantee its territorial integrity and unity within internationally recognized borders, to emphasize the need for this commitment to be respected in order to avoid any possibility of a repetition of the events of 1990 and to urge the adoption of policies that will make it possible to achieve this goal in a climate of goodwill and good-neighbourly relations. In this regard, the Summit draws Arab leaders' attention to the importance of halting hostile press campaigns and statements, so as to create a positive atmosphere that will assure the two countries that the principles of good-neighbourliness and non-interference in internal affairs are being respected;

2. To urge resumption of the work of the Technical Subcommittee of the Tripartite Commission responsible for questions relating to Kuwaiti nationals held prisoner or hostage since 1990 and 1991, which was reactivated on 8 January 2003, and to commend Kuwait's positive response to all the information provided by Iraq through the International Committee of the Red Cross concerning missing Kuwaiti nationals. The Council hopes that decisive, significant progress will be made in this area. The Council also welcomes the return by Iraq of part of the Kuwaiti archives and calls on Iraq to return the remaining archives and other property of the Kuwaiti State.

Resolution 244 of the fifteenth session of the Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level, adopted on 1 March 2003.

Annex 3 to the letter dated 3 March 2003 from the Permanent Observer for the League of Arab States to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Resolution

The Arab-Israeli conflict, the evolution of the Palestinian question, intensified Israeli aggression against the Palestinian people and its impact on peace and security in the Middle East region

The Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level,

1. Deeply concerned at the grave situation facing the Palestinian people and their national authorities as a result of the continuing and escalating Israeli aggression, which has claimed a large number of victims and caused heavy losses to the Palestinian national economy,

2. Reaffirming its complete solidarity with the Palestinian people in their struggle to regain their legitimate rights and its unequivocal support for their committed struggle for these rights,

3. Also reaffirming its earlier resolutions on support for the Palestinian economy,

Decides:

1. To pay a resounding tribute to the Palestinian people and their legitimate national leadership, headed by President Yasser Arafat, for their tenacious resistance against the continuing and escalating Israeli aggression that violates the rights of this people and seeks to destroy their capacities, sacred places and national leadership, and to reaffirm its determination to continue to provide all forms of political, moral and material support for the Palestinian people, their heroic intifada and their legitimate struggle against occupation;

2. To consider that the all-out and premeditated aggression by Israel against the Palestinian people, their authorities and their national institutions is aimed at bringing the peace process in the Middle East to a definitive halt and to hold Israel solely responsible for this policy;

3. To reaffirm the legitimate right of the Palestinian people to resist the occupation of their land by Israel and to take action within the framework of respect for international legality and of the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and Security Council of the United Nations to defend themselves against the aggressive practices of the occupation forces, manifested in their policies of colonization and the blockading and reoccupation of cities, villages and refugee camps, without mentioning assassinations, arrests, the destruction of infrastructure, homes, religious institutions and medical centres and attacks on international organizations working in the humanitarian field;

4. To take steps to put an end to the aggression of which the Palestinian people are victims, to ensure international protection for Palestinian civilians through the dispatch of an international protection force to oblige Israel to respect the provisions of the Fourth Geneva Convention and to request the Secretary-

General of the United Nations to make arrangements for the early dispatch to the area of a team to investigate Israeli crimes and identify their authors with a view to bringing them to international justice;

5. To reaffirm the Arab identity of Jerusalem and the rejection of all attempts by Israel to Judaize the city, to consider all the acts and practices engaged in by Israel, as the occupying Power, null and void and in violation of the resolutions that express international legality, to also consider the establishment of settlements in Jerusalem and other parts of the Palestinian territory as a danger that threatens the peace and security of the region, and to reaffirm the support of Arabs for this heroic city;

6. To condemn the rejection by Israel of all initiatives and proposals for a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East currently being put forward by various international parties and groups;

7. To reaffirm the commitment of Arab States to the Arab peace initiative put forward at the 2002 Beirut Summit that sets out the bases for a just and comprehensive peace settlement in the region and to hold Israel responsible for the failure of peace efforts;

8. To urge the international Quartet to resume its efforts to bring peace to the Middle East and to find a just and comprehensive solution to the Arab-Israeli conflict based on the Arab peace initiative;

9. To reiterate its earlier resolutions, in which it expressed its commitment to a just and comprehensive peace as an objective and a strategic choice to be achieved through the implementation at all levels of decisions expressing international legality, in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council and, in particular, resolutions 242 (1967), 338 (1973) and 425 (1978), and with resolution 194 (III) of the General Assembly, and to stress the need to take as the point of departure the Madrid Peace Conference and the principle of "land for peace". The Council also stresses that the achievement of this objective requires the complete withdrawal of Israel from all of the Arab territories that it occupies, including the Syrian Arab Golan, back to the lines of 4 June 1967, and from the Lebanese territory still under occupation, including the Shab`a farms area, an end to the occupation of Palestinian lands, and the exercise by the Palestinian people of all of their inalienable rights, including their right to self-determination and to the establishment of an independent State on all of their national territory with Jerusalem as its capital, the guarantee of the right of return for Palestinian refugees and the release of Palestinians who have been abducted or arrested and are now in Israeli prisons;

10. To charge the Committee on the Arab Peace Initiative with pursuing and intensifying Arab efforts at the international level and to make the necessary preparations for bringing the question before the Security Council so that this organ can assume its full responsibility in the face of the grave situation existing in the Palestinian territories and its consequences for peace and stability in the region and the world;

11. To reiterate the firm commitment of Arabs to provide financial support for the budget of the Palestinian National Authority for the next six months beginning 1 April 2003 and to automatically renew this assistance under the arrangements established at the Beirut Summit for as long as the Israeli aggression

continues, to invite the member States of the Arab League that have not yet done so to make the remainder of their contributions to the budget of the Palestinian National Authority and to the Al-Aqsa Fund and the Al-Quds Intifadah Fund, in accordance with the decisions of the Beirut Summit;

12. To charge the General Secretariat with continuing its efforts to collect donations from Arab populations in support of the resistance of the Palestinian people and to continue to cooperate with the competent international organizations providing support for the process of development and reconstruction in the Palestinian territories.

Resolution 245 of the fifteenth session of the Council of the League of Arab States, meeting at the summit level, adopted on 1 March 2003.